United Nations A/RES/57/179

General Assembly

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Fifty-seventh session
Agenda item 102

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/57/549)*]

57/179. Working towards the elimination of crimes against women committed in the name of honour

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the obligation of all States to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to life, liberty and security of person, as stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[1] and reaffirming also the obligations of States parties under human rights instruments, in particular the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,[2] the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,[2] the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women[3] and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,[4]

Recalling the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action[5] and the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women,[6] as well as the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women,[7] and the outcome document of the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",[8]

Bearing in mind that crimes against women committed in the name of honour are a human rights issue and that States have an obligation to exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate and punish the perpetrators of such crimes and to provide protection to the victims, and that not doing so violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms,

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[1] Resolution 217 A (III).

[2] See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

[3] Resolution 34/180, annex.

[4] Resolution 44/25, annex.

[5] A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.

[6] See resolution 48/104.

[7] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

[8] Resolution S-23/3, annex.

Stressing the need to treat all forms of violence against women and girls, including crimes committed in the name of honour, as a criminal offence, punishable by law,

Aware that inadequate understanding of the root causes of all violence against women, including crimes committed in the name of honour, which take many different forms, and inadequate data on such violence hinder informed policy analysis, at both the domestic and the international levels, and efforts to eliminate such violence,

Deeply concerned that women and girls are victims of these crimes, as described in the relevant sections of the reports of the Human Rights Committee, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and notes in this regard the relevant parts of the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on violence against women, its causes and consequences,[9]

Emphasizing that such crimes are incompatible with all religious and cultural values,

Bearing in mind Commission on Human Rights resolution 2002/52 of 23 April 2002,[10]

Emphasizing that the elimination of crimes against women committed in the name of honour requires greater efforts and commitment on the part of Governments and the international community, inter alia, through international cooperation efforts, and civil society, including non-governmental organizations, and that fundamental changes in societal attitude are required,

Underlining the importance of the empowerment of women and their effective participation in decision-making and policy-making processes as one of the critical tools to prevent and eliminate crimes against women committed in the name of honour,

1. *Welcomes*:

(*a*) The activities and initiatives of States aimed at the elimination of crimes against women committed in the name of honour, including the adoption of amendments to relevant national laws relating to such crimes, the effective implementation of such laws and educational, social and other measures, including national information and awareness-raising campaigns, as well as activities and initiatives of States aimed at the elimination of all other forms of violence against women;

(*b*) The efforts, such as projects, undertaken by United Nations bodies, funds and programmes, including the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Development Fund for Women, to address the issue of crimes against women committed in the name of honour, and encourages them to coordinate their efforts;

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[9] E/CN.4/2002/83, paras. 21–37.

[10] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2002, Supplement No. 3* (E/2002/23), chap. II, sect. A.

(*c*) The work carried out by civil society, including non-governmental organizations, such as women's organizations, grass-roots movements and individuals, in raising awareness of such crimes and their harmful effects;

2. *Expresses its concern* that women continue to be victims of crimes committed in the name of honour, and at the continuing occurrence in all regions of the world of such violence, which takes many different forms, and at failures to prosecute and punish perpetrators;

3. *Calls upon* all States:

(*a*) To fulfil their obligations under the relevant international human rights instruments and to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action[7] and the outcome document of the special session of the General Assembly;[8]

(*b*) To continue to intensify efforts to prevent and eliminate crimes against women committed in the name of honour, which take many different forms, by using legislative, administrative and programmatic measures;

(*c*) To investigate promptly and thoroughly, prosecute effectively and document cases of crimes against women committed in the name of honour and punish the perpetrators;

(*d*) To take all necessary measures to ensure that such crimes are not tolerated;

(*e*) To intensify efforts to raise awareness of the need to prevent and eliminate crimes against women committed in the name of honour, with the aim of changing the attitudes and behaviour that allow such crimes to be committed by involving, inter alia, community leaders;

(*f*) To encourage the efforts of the media to engage in awareness-raising campaigns;

(*g*) To encourage, support and implement measures and programmes aimed at increasing the knowledge and understanding of the causes and consequences of crimes against women committed in the name of honour, including the provision of training for those responsible for enforcing the law, such as police personnel and judicial and legal personnel, and to strengthen their capacity to respond to complaints of such crimes in an impartial and effective manner and take necessary measures to ensure the protection of actual and potential victims;

(*h*) To continue to support the work of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, in addressing this issue and to strengthen cooperation with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations;

(*i*) To establish, strengthen or facilitate, where possible, support services to respond to the needs of actual and potential victims by, inter alia, providing for them the appropriate protection, safe shelter, counselling, legal aid, health-care services, rehabilitation and reintegration into society;

(*j*) To address effectively complaints of crimes against women committed in the name of honour, inter alia, by creating, strengthening or facilitating institutional mechanisms so that victims and others can report such crimes in a safe and confidential environment;

(*k*) To gather and disseminate statistical information on the occurrence of such crimes, including information disaggregated by age;

(*l*) To include, if within their reporting obligations, information on legal and policy measures adopted and implemented in their efforts to prevent and eliminate crimes against women committed in the name of honour, where appropriate, in their reports to the human rights treaty bodies, including the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women;

4. *Invites*:

(*a*) The international community, including relevant United Nations bodies, funds and programmes, inter alia, through technical assistance and advisory services programmes, to support the efforts of all countries, at their request, aimed at strengthening institutional capacity for preventing crimes against women committed in the name of honour and at addressing the root causes of such crimes;

(*b*) The relevant human rights treaty bodies to continue to address this issue, where appropriate;

(*c*) The Commission on the Status of Women to address this subject at its forty-seventh session under the priority theme "Women's human rights and the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls, as defined in the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of the special session of the General Assembly entitled 'Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century' ";

5. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;[11]

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to include in his report on the issue of elimination of violence against women to be submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session a substantive report on the subject of the present resolution, based on all available data, containing an analysis of the root causes of these crimes, supportive statistical data, where available, and information on initiatives taken by States.

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18 December 2002

[11] A/57/169.

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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/57/549)*]

57/180. Improvement of the status of women in the United Nations system

The General Assembly,

Recalling Articles 1 and 101 of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as Article 8, which provides that the United Nations shall place no restrictions on the eligibility of men and women to participate in any capacity and under conditions of equality in its principal and subsidiary organs,

Recalling also the goal, contained in the Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women,[1] of achieving overall gender equality, particularly at the Professional level and above, by 2000 and the further actions and initiatives set out in the outcome document adopted by the General Assembly at its special session entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",[2]

Recalling further its resolution 56/127 of 19 December 2001,

Taking note of Commission on Human Rights resolution 2002/50 of 23 April 2002 on integrating the human rights of women throughout the United Nations system,[3] in particular paragraph 14, in which the Commission recognized that gender mainstreaming would strongly benefit from the enhanced and full participation of women, including at the higher levels of decision-making in the United Nations system,

Welcoming the report of the Secretary-General on women, peace and security[4] and the open debate held in the Security Council on 25 July 2002 on women and peace and security,[5]

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[1] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[2] Resolution S-23/3, annex.

[3] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2002, Supplement No. 3* (E/2002/23), chap. II, sect. A.

[4] S/2002/1154.

[5] See S/PV.4589 and Corr.1 and S/PV.4589 (Resumption 1).

Taking into account the continuing lack of representation or underrepresentation of women from certain countries, in particular from developing countries, including least developed countries and small island developing States, and from countries with economies in transition,

Noting with appreciation those departments and offices that have achieved the goal of gender balance, as well as those departments that have met or exceeded the goal of 50 per cent in the selection of women candidates for vacant posts in the past year,

Welcoming the 4 per cent increase in the number of women at the D-2 level, which brings the proportion of women at that level to 22.3 per cent, but expressing concern that at other senior levels of the Secretariat the proportion of women has decreased overall since 1998 to only 10.5 per cent of Under-Secretaries-General and 12.5 per cent of Assistant Secretaries-General,

Expressing concern that only one of the fifty-one special representatives and envoys of the Secretary-General is a woman, and expressing regret that the number of women heading United Nations agencies has been halved, from six to three, and also that the percentage of women assigned to peace operations has decreased,

Taking note of the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services of the Secretariat on possible discrimination due to nationality, race, sex, religion and language in recruitment, promotion and placement,[6]

Concerned at the finding of the Office of Internal Oversight Services that the proportion of women separating from the Organization increased from 42 per cent in 1998 to 48 per cent in 2001, that at most levels women are reappointed less frequently than men, and that at these rates the Organization is unlikely to meet its gender parity target without concerted efforts to recruit females and retain the female staff currently employed,

Noting that the statistics on the representation of women in some organizations of the United Nations system are not fully up to date,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General[7] and the actions described therein;

2. *Regrets* that the goal of 50/50 gender distribution was not met by the end of 2000, and urges the Secretary-General to redouble his efforts to realize significant progress towards this goal in the near future;

3. *Reaffirms* the urgent goal of achieving 50/50 gender distribution in all categories of posts within the United Nations system, especially at senior and policy-making levels, with full respect for the principle of equitable geographical distribution, in conformity with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, and also taking into account the continuing lack of representation or underrepresentation of women from certain countries, in particular from developing countries and countries with economies in transition;

4. *Expresses concern* that in four departments and offices of the Secretariat women still account for less than 30 per cent of staff, and encourages the Secretary-General to intensify his efforts to meet the goal of gender balance within all departments and offices of the Secretariat;

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[6] See A/56/956.

[7] A/57/447.

5. *Welcomes*:

(*a*) The ongoing personal commitment of the Secretary-General to meeting the goal of gender equality and his assurance that gender balance will be given the highest priority in his continuing efforts to bring about a new management culture in the Organization;

(*b*) The pledge of the executive heads of the organizations of the United Nations system to intensify their efforts to meet the gender equality goals set out in the Beijing Declaration[8] and Platform for Action;[1]

(*c*) The inclusion of the objective of improving gender balance in action plans on human resources management for individual departments and offices, and encourages further cooperation, including the sharing of best-practice initiatives, between heads of departments and offices, the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Office of Human Resources Management of the Secretariat in the implementation of those plans, which include specific targets and strategies for improving the representation of women in individual departments;

(*d*) The decision, within the context of the new staff selection system,[9] to hold heads of departments and offices accountable for meeting the gender targets in departmental human resource action plans through their performance compacts;

(*e*) The continuing designation of focal points for women in the United Nations system, and requests the Secretary-General to ensure that the focal points are designated at a sufficiently high level and enjoy full access to senior management, both at Headquarters and in the field;

(*f*) The continuing provision of specific training programmes on gender mainstreaming and gender issues in the workplace, tailored to meet the special needs of individual departments, commends those heads of departments and offices who have launched gender training for their managers and staff, and strongly encourages those who have not yet organized such training to do so by the end of the biennium;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in order to achieve and maintain the goal of 50/50 gender distribution with full respect for the principle of equitable geographical distribution, in conformity with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter:

(*a*) To continue to develop innovative recruitment strategies to identify and attract suitably qualified women candidates, particularly from and in developing countries and countries with economies in transition and other Member States that are unrepresented or underrepresented in the Secretariat, and in occupations in which women are underrepresented;

(*b*) To encourage the United Nations system and its agencies and departments to make more effective use of existing information technology resources and systems and other established methods to disseminate information about employment opportunities for women and to better coordinate rosters of potential women candidates;

(*c*) To continue to monitor closely the progress made by departments and offices in meeting the goal of gender balance, to ensure that the appointment and

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[8] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[9] See ST/AI/2002/4.

promotion of suitably qualified women will not be less than 50 per cent of all appointments and promotions until the goal of 50/50 gender distribution is met;

(*d*) To strongly encourage heads of departments and offices to continue selecting female candidates when their qualifications are the same as, or better than, those of male candidates, and to effectively encourage, monitor and assess the performance of managers in meeting targets for improving women's representation;

(*e*) To encourage consultation by heads of departments and offices with departmental focal points on women during the selection process and to ensure that the focal points are designated at a sufficiently high level and enjoy full and effective access to senior management;

(*f*) To enable the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, as outlined in the Beijing Platform for Action, to effectively contribute to, monitor and facilitate the setting and implementation of gender targets in human resource action plans, including by ensuring access to the information required to carry out that work;

(*g*) To intensify his efforts to create, within existing resources, a gender-sensitive work environment supportive of the needs of his staff, both women and men, by, inter alia, actively pursuing appropriate work/life policies, such as flexible working time, flexible workplace arrangements, career development and childcare and elder-care needs, and by providing more comprehensive information to prospective candidates and new recruits on employment opportunities for spouses, providing support for the activities of women's networks and organizations within the United Nations system and expanding gender-sensitivity training in all departments, offices and duty stations;

(*h*) To continue to work to further strengthen the policy against harassment, including sexual harassment, by, inter alia, ensuring the full implementation of the guidelines for its application at Headquarters and in the field, including in peacekeeping operations, and further requests the early issuance of the directive on sexual harassment prepared by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the Secretariat for use in peacekeeping and other field missions, as well as user-friendly guidelines on sexual harassment to be prepared for the United Nations system by the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the inter-agency working group;

(*i*) To undertake further analysis of the probable causes of the slow advance in the improvement of the status of women in the United Nations system, as outlined in paragraph 56 of his report,[7] to institute remedial measures and to report on progress made in this context to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session;

7. *Strongly encourages* the Secretary-General to renew his efforts to appoint more women as special representatives and envoys to pursue good offices on his behalf, especially in matters related to peacekeeping, peace-building, preventive diplomacy and economic and social development, as well as in operational activities, and to appoint more women as resident coordinators and to other high-level positions;

8. *Encourages* the Secretary-General and the executive heads of the organizations of the United Nations system to continue to develop common approaches for retaining women, promoting inter-agency mobility and improving career development opportunities;

9. *Encourages* the United Nations and Member States to continue to implement the outcome of the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century" pertaining to the improvement of the status of women in the United Nations system;[2]

10. *Strongly encourages* Member States:

(*a*) To support the efforts of the United Nations and the specialized agencies to achieve the goal of 50/50 gender distribution, especially at senior and policy-making levels, by identifying and regularly submitting more women candidates for appointment to positions in the United Nations system, by identifying and proposing national recruitment sources that will assist the organizations of the United Nations system in identifying suitable women candidates, in particular from developing countries and countries with economies in transition, and by encouraging more women to apply for positions within the Secretariat, the specialized agencies, funds and programmes and the regional commissions, including in areas in which women are underrepresented, such as peacekeeping, peace-building and other non-traditional areas;

(*b*) To identify women candidates for assignment to peacekeeping missions and to improve the representation of women in military and civilian police contingents;

(*c*) To identify and submit regularly more women candidates for appointment or election to intergovernmental, expert and treaty bodies;

(*d*) To identify and nominate more women candidates for appointment or election as judges or other senior officials in international courts and tribunals;

11. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-seventh session and to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session on the implementation of the present resolution, including by providing up-to-date statistics on the number and percentage of women in all organizational units and at all levels throughout the United Nations system, as well as gender-segregated attrition rates for all organizational units and at all levels, and on the implementation of departmental action plans for the achievement of gender balance.

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[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/57/550)*]

57/181. Elimination of all forms of violence against women, including crimes identified in the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century"

The General Assembly,

Recalling the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, which, inter alia, calls for international cooperation in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion,

Recalling also the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[1] the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women,[2] the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women,[3] the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination,[4] the Beijing Declaration[5] and Platform for Action[6] adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women, the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted on 25 June 1993 by the World Conference on Human Rights[7] and the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[8]

Recalling further its resolution 55/68 of 4 December 2000,

Reaffirming the obligations of all States to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, as enunciated in the Charter, and reaffirming also the obligations of States parties under international human rights instruments, in

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[1] Resolution 217 A (III).

[2] See resolution 2263 (XXII).

[3] See resolution 48/104.

[4] See resolution 1904 (XVIII).

[5] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[6] Ibid., annex II.

[7] A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.

[8] See resolution 55/2.

particular the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,[9] the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,[9] the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[10] the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination,[11] the Convention on the Rights of the Child,[12] the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment[13] and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families,[14]

Reaffirming also the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",[15]

Reaffirming further the call for the elimination of violence against women and girls, especially all forms of commercial sexual exploitation as well as economic exploitation, including trafficking in women and children, female infanticide, crimes committed in the name of honour, crimes committed in the name of passion, racially motivated crimes, the abduction and sale of children, dowry-related violence and deaths, acid attacks and harmful traditional or customary practices, such as female genital mutilation and early and forced marriages,

Stressing the importance of the empowerment of women as a tool to eliminate all forms of violence against women, including crimes identified in the outcome document of the twenty-third special session,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General;[16]

2. *Expresses deep concern* at the persistence of various forms of violence and crimes against women in all parts of the world, especially all forms of commercial sexual exploitation as well as economic exploitation, including trafficking in women and children, female infanticide, crimes committed in the name of honour, crimes committed in the name of passion, racially motivated crimes, the abduction and sale of children, dowry-related violence and deaths, acid attacks and harmful traditional or customary practices, such as female genital mutilation and early and forced marriages;

3. *Stresses* that all forms of violence against women, including crimes identified in the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly,[15] are obstacles to the advancement and empowerment of women, and reaffirms that violence against women both violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment by women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms;

4. *Also stresses* the need to treat all forms of violence against women and girls of all ages as a criminal offence punishable by law, including violence based on all forms of discrimination;

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[9] See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

[10] Resolution 34/180, annex.

[11] Resolution 2106 A (XX), annex.

[12] Resolution 44/25, annex.

[13] Resolution 39/46, annex.

[14] Resolution 45/158, annex.

[15] Resolution S-23/3, annex.

[16] A/57/171.

5. *Welcomes* specific legal and comprehensive legislative measures being enacted or contemplated, in particular with regard to various forms of violence against women and girls;

6. *Also welcomes* in this regard the launching of various initiatives, strategies and action plans aimed at, among other things, eradication, prevention, promotion, information, legislation, protection and welfare, education and research, enhancement of the economic capacity of women and the monitoring of the various forms of violence against women;

7. *Reaffirms* that there is increased awareness of and commitment to preventing and combating violence against women, including crimes identified in the outcome document of the twenty-third special session, welcomes in this context various legal, administrative and other measures taken by Governments for their prevention and elimination, and calls for high priority to be attached to the further strengthening of such measures;

8. *Urges* Member States to strengthen awareness and preventive measures for the elimination of all forms of violence against women, whether occurring in public or private life, by encouraging and supporting public campaigns to enhance awareness about the unacceptability and the social costs of violence against women, inter alia, through educational and media campaigns in cooperation with educators, community leaders and the electronic and print media;

9. *Expresses its appreciation* of the work being done by non-governmental organizations, including women's organizations, community-based organizations and individuals, in raising awareness about the economic, social and psychological costs of all forms of violence against women, including crimes identified in the outcome document of the twenty-third special session, and in this regard encourages Governments to continue their support for the work of the non-governmental organizations in addressing this issue;

10. *Calls upon* States to fulfil their obligations under the relevant human rights instruments and to implement the Beijing Platform for Action[9] as well as the outcome document of the twenty-third special session;

11. *Encourages* States parties to include in their reports to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and other relevant treaty bodies, wherever possible, sex-disaggregated data and information on measures taken or initiated to eliminate all forms of violence against women, including crimes identified in the outcome document of the twenty-third special session;

12. *Urges* relevant entities of the United Nations system, within their mandates, to assist countries, upon their request, in their efforts to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women, including crimes identified in the outcome document of the twenty-third special session, and in this regard expresses its appreciation of the work being done by the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Development Fund for Women and other relevant funds and programmes aimed at preventing and eliminating violence against women and girls;

13. *Invites* the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on violence against women, its causes and consequences, to further devote equal attention to all forms of violence against women, including crimes identified in the outcome document of the twenty-third special session, in her work and her reports, within her mandate, to the Commission on Human Rights and the General Assembly;

14. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive report on this matter to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session.

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57/182. Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 50/203 of 22 December 1995, 51/69 of 12 December 1996, 52/100 of 12 December 1997, 53/120 of 9 December 1998, 54/141 of 17 December 1999, 55/71 of 4 December 2000 and 56/132 of 19 December 2001,

Recalling also the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",[1] and the proposed actions and initiatives to overcome obstacles and challenges thereto,

Deeply convinced that the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action[2] and the outcome of the twenty-third special session are important contributions to the advancement of women worldwide in the achievement of gender equality and must be translated into effective action by all States, the United Nations system and other organizations concerned, as well as by non-governmental organizations,

Stressing the importance of strong, sustained political will and commitment at the national, regional and international levels for achieving full and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session,

Recognizing that the responsibility for the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session rests primarily at the national level and that strengthened efforts are necessary in this respect, and reiterating that enhanced international cooperation is essential for the effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session,

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[1] Resolution S-23/2, annex, and resolution S-23/3, annex.

[2] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

Welcoming the increased attention to the situation of women and girls and the integration of a gender perspective in the work of the United Nations, in particular in the outcomes of major conferences, special sessions and summit conferences and their follow-up processes, and reaffirming its commitment to building on progress achieved in this respect,

Welcoming also the attention given to the situation of women and girls and the integration of a gender perspective in the outcomes of the International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Monterrey, Mexico, from 18 to 22 March 2002,[3] the Second World Assembly on Ageing, held in Madrid from 8 to 12 April 2002,[4] the twenty-seventh special session of the General Assembly, held in New York from 8 to 10 May 2002,[5] and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 26 August to 4 September 2002,[6]

Emphasizing the importance of the decision taken by the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2001/41 of 26 July 2001, to devote the coordination segment of one of its substantive sessions, before 2005, to the review and appraisal of the system-wide implementation of agreed conclusions 1997/2 on mainstreaming the gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system, adopted by the Council on 18 July 1997,[7]

Noting with concern that the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto[8] have not yet entered into force,

Reaffirming the primary and essential role of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council in promoting the advancement of women and gender equality, while noting the open debate on peacekeeping and gender held in the Security Council on 25 July 2002,[9]

1. *Reaffirms* the goals, objectives and commitments contained in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action[2] and also in the political declaration and further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-third special session;[1]

2. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to and progress made in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly;[10]

3. *Calls upon* Governments, the relevant entities of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates, and all relevant actors of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, to continue to take effective action to

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[3] *Report of the International Conference on Financing for Development, Monterrey, Mexico, 18–22 March 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.II.A.7), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[4] *Report of the Second World Assembly on Ageing, Madrid, 8–12 April 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.IV.4), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

[5] Resolution S-27/2, annex.

[6] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolutions 1 and 2.

[7] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 3* (A/52/3/Rev.1), chap. IV, para. 4.

[8] Resolution 55/25, annexes I–III, and resolution 55/255, annex.

[9] See S/PV.4589 and Corr.1 and S/PV.4589 (Resumption 1).

[10] A/57/286.

achieve full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session, as elaborated in the above-mentioned documents;

4. *Strongly encourages* Governments to continue to support the role and contribution of civil society, in particular non-governmental organizations and women's organizations, in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session;

5. *Calls upon* Governments and all other relevant actors to continue to integrate a gender perspective in the implementation of and follow-up to recent United Nations conferences, summits and special sessions and in future reports on this subject;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to include in his annual and quinquennial reports on the follow-up to the United Nations Millennium Declaration[11] an assessment of the progress made in promoting the goal of gender equality, in particular in relation to the development goals set forth in the Millennium Declaration, and recommendations to improve the measurement and coverage of indicators so that progress towards gender equality can be evaluated over time;

7. *Welcomes* the convening of the World Summit on the Information Society, to be held in Geneva in 2003 and in Tunis in 2005, and encourages Governments and all other stakeholders to integrate a gender perspective in the preparatory processes and outcome documents;

8. *Reaffirms* its decision that the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on the Status of Women, in accordance with their respective mandates and with General Assembly resolution 48/162 of 20 December 1993 and other relevant resolutions, constitute a three-tiered intergovernmental mechanism that plays the primary role in overall policy-making and follow-up and in coordinating the implementation and monitoring of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session;

9. *Also reaffirms* that the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and the twenty-third special session will be undertaken within the framework of an integrated and coordinated follow-up to major international conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields;

10. *Invites* the Economic and Social Council to continue its efforts to ensure that gender mainstreaming is an integral part of all activities in its work and that of its subsidiary bodies, building upon agreed conclusions 1997/2 adopted by the Council on 18 July 1997,[7] and in this regard welcomes the inclusion of the issue of gender mainstreaming in its agenda, the consideration of annual progress made in gender mainstreaming and the attention given to gender perspective in the outcomes of the 2002 substantive session of the Council;

11. *Encourages* the Council to request the regional commissions, within their respective mandates and resources, to intensify efforts to build up a database, to be updated regularly, in which all programmes and projects carried out in their respective regions by organizations or bodies of the United Nations system are listed, and to facilitate the dissemination of information on such programmes and

[11] See resolution 55/2.

projects, as well as the evaluation of their impact on the empowerment of women through the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action;

12. *Welcomes* the contribution of the Commission on the Status of Women in the follow-up and review of the future implementation of the commitments made in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session, reaffirms that the Commission will continue to play a central role in this regard, and encourages Governments, the relevant specialized agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system and civil society to continue to support its work;

13. *Recognizes* the importance attached to the regional and subregional monitoring of the global and regional platforms for action and of the implementation of the outcome of the twenty-third special session by regional commissions and other regional or subregional structures, within their mandates, in consultation with Governments, and calls for the promotion of further cooperation in that respect among Governments and, where appropriate, national machineries of the same region;

14. *Also recognizes* that sustained political will and commitment at the national, regional and international levels are essential elements for the full and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session;

15. *Further recognizes* that adequate mobilization of resources at the national and international levels, as well as new and additional resources for the developing countries, including the least developed countries and countries with economies in transition, from all available funding mechanisms, including multilateral, bilateral and private sources, will also be required;

16. *Acknowledges* that the creation of an enabling environment at the national and international levels, including through the full participation of women at all levels of decision-making, is necessary to ensure the full participation of women in economic activities, and calls upon States to remove obstacles to the full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session;

17. *Reaffirms* that, in order to ensure the effective implementation of the strategic objectives of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session, the United Nations system should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective, including through the work of the Division for the Advancement of Women and of the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the maintenance of gender units and focal points;

18. *Also reaffirms* that United Nations bodies that focus on gender issues, such as the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women and the United Nations Children's Fund, have a critical role to play in the implementation of the objectives of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session, and recognizes that gender specialists throughout the United Nations system also have an important role to play in this regard;

19. *Expresses its appreciation* for the efforts made by all relevant organizations of the United Nations system in promoting the role of women in conflict prevention and resolution;

20. *Recognizes* the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution, and urges the United Nations system and Governments to make further efforts in this regard and to take steps to ensure and support the full participation of women at all levels of decision-making and implementation in development activities and peace processes, including conflict prevention and resolution, post-conflict reconstruction, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace-building, as well as through the integration of a gender perspective into those United Nations processes;

21. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that all United Nations personnel and officials at Headquarters and in the field, especially in field operations, receive training so that they mainstream a gender perspective in their work, including gender impact analysis, and to ensure appropriate follow-up to such training;

22. *Requests* all bodies that deal with programme and budgetary matters, including the Committee for Programme and Coordination, to ensure that all programmes, medium-term plans and programme budgets visibly mainstream a gender perspective;

23. *Invites* States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women[12] to include information on measures taken to implement the outcome of the twenty-third special session, as well as the Beijing Platform for Action, in their reports to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women under article 18 of the Convention;

24. *Welcomes* the entry into force of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[13] and urges States parties to the Convention that have not yet done so to consider signing, ratifying or acceding to the Optional Protocol;

25. *Urges* Member States to consider signing, ratifying or acceding to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto,[8] in particular the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children;

26. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to disseminate the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session as widely as possible in all the official languages of the United Nations;

27. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to integrate a gender perspective in his reporting to the General Assembly, in order to support gender-sensitive policy formulation;

28. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to report annually to the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on the Status of Women on follow-up to and progress in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session with an assessment of progress made in mainstreaming a gender perspective

[12] Resolution 34/180, annex.

[13] Resolution 54/4, annex.

within the United Nations system, including by providing information on key achievements, lessons learned and best practices, and to recommend further measures and strategies for future action within the United Nations system;

29. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-eighth session the item entitled "Implementation of the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women and of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled 'Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century' ".

77th plenary meeting
18 December 2002

General Assembly

Distr.: General
6 February 2003

Fifty-seventh session
Agenda item 104

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/57/551)*]

57/183. Assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 56/135 of 19 December 2001,

Recalling also the provisions of its resolution 2312 (XXII) of 14 December 1967, by which it adopted the Declaration on Territorial Asylum,

Recalling further the Organization of African Unity Convention governing the specific aspects of refugee problems in Africa of 1969[1] and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights,[2]

Recalling the Khartoum Declaration[3] and the Recommendations on Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons in Africa[4] adopted by the Organization of African Unity[5] at the ministerial meeting held at Khartoum on 13 and 14 December 1998,

Welcoming decision CM/Dec.667 (LXXVI) on the situation of refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa adopted by the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity at its seventy-sixth ordinary session, held at Durban, South Africa, from 28 June to 6 July 2002,

Welcoming also decision AHG/Dec.165 (XXXVII) on the fiftieth anniversary of the adoption of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity at its thirty-seventh ordinary session, held at Lusaka from 9 to 11 July 2001,[6]

Recalling General Assembly resolution 57/2 of 16 September 2002 on the United Nations Declaration on the New Partnership for Africa's Development, and

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[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1001, No. 14691.

[2] Ibid., vol. 1520, No. 26363.

[3] A/54/682, annex I.

[4] Ibid., annex II.

[5] On 8 July 2002, the Organization of African Unity ceased to exist and, in its place, the African Union came into force on 9 July 2002.

[6] See A/56/457, annex I.

affirming that international support for the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development[7] is essential, notably as it relates to refugees, returnees and displaced persons,

Reaffirming that the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees,[8] together with the 1967 Protocol thereto,[9] as complemented by the Organization of African Unity Convention of 1969, remains the foundation of the international refugee protection regime in Africa,

Recognizing that the fundamental principles and rights embodied in those Conventions have provided a resilient protection regime within which millions of refugees have been able to find safety from armed conflicts and persecution,

Welcoming in that regard the Declaration adopted at the Ministerial Meeting of States Parties to the 1951 Convention and/or its 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, held at Geneva on 12 and 13 December 2001,[10] as an expression of their collective commitment to full and effective implementation of the Convention and the Protocol,

Recalling the Comprehensive Implementation Plan adopted by the Special Meeting of Governmental and Non-Governmental Technical Experts convened by the Organization of African Unity and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees at Conakry from 27 to 29 March 2000 on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Organization of African Unity Convention governing the specific aspects of refugee problems in Africa of 1969, and noting its endorsement by the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity at its seventy-second ordinary session, held at Lomé from 6 to 8 July 2000,[11]

Commending the First Ministerial Conference on Human Rights in Africa of the Organization of African Unity, held at Grand Baie, Mauritius, from 12 to 16 April 1999, and recalling the attention paid to issues relevant to refugees and displaced persons in the Declaration and Plan of Action adopted by the Conference,

Recognizing the contributions made by African States to the development of regional standards for the protection of refugees and returnees, and noting with appreciation that countries of asylum are hosting refugees in a humanitarian spirit and in a spirit of African solidarity and brotherhood,

Recognizing also the need for States to address resolutely the root causes of forced displacement and to create conditions that facilitate durable solutions for refugees and displaced persons, and stressing in that regard the need for States to foster peace, stability and prosperity throughout the African continent to forestall large refugee flows,

Convinced of the need to strengthen the capacity of States to provide assistance to and protection for refugees, returnees and displaced persons and of the need for the international community, within the context of burden-sharing, to increase its material, financial and technical assistance to the countries affected by refugees, returnees and displaced persons, to simultaneously address the inadequacies of existing assistance arrangements and to support initiatives in this regard,

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[7] A/57/304, annex.

[8] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 189, No. 2545.

[9] Ibid., vol. 606, No. 8791.

[10] HCR/MMSP/2001/10, annex I.

[11] See A/55/286, annex I, decision CM/Dec.531 (LXXII), para. 8.

Acknowledging with appreciation that some assistance is already rendered by the international community to refugees, returnees and displaced persons and host countries in Africa,

Deeply concerned about the continuing critical humanitarian situation in African countries, in particular in the Horn of Africa and southern Africa, aggravated, among other things, by persistent natural disasters, including drought, floods and desertification, which can precipitate the displacement of people,

Noting with great concern that, despite all the efforts made so far by the United Nations, the African Union and others, the situation of refugees and displaced persons in Africa remains precarious,

Stressing that the provision of relief and assistance to African refugees by the international community should be on an equitable and non-discriminatory basis,

Considering that, among refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons, women and children are the majority of the population affected by conflict and bear the brunt of atrocities and other consequences of conflict,

1. *Takes note* of the reports of the Secretary-General[12] and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees;[13]

2. *Notes with concern* that the deteriorating socio-economic situation, compounded by political instability, internal strife, human rights violations and natural disasters, has led to increased numbers of refugees and displaced persons in some countries of Africa, and remains particularly concerned about the impact of large-scale refugee populations on the security, socio-economic situation and environment of countries of asylum;

3. *Encourages* African States to ensure the full implementation of and follow-up to the Comprehensive Implementation Plan adopted by the Special Meeting of Governmental and Non-Governmental Technical Experts convened by the Organization of African Unity and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees at Conakry from 27 to 29 March 2000 on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Organization of African Unity Convention governing the specific aspects of refugee problems in Africa of 1969;[1]

4. *Calls upon* States and other parties to armed conflict to observe scrupulously the letter and the spirit of international humanitarian law, bearing in mind that armed conflict is one of the principal causes of forced displacement in Africa;

5. *Expresses its appreciation* for the leadership shown by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees since assuming office in January 2001, and commends the Office of the High Commissioner for its ongoing efforts, with the support of the international community, to assist African countries of asylum and to respond to the protection and assistance needs of refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa;

6. *Takes note* of the Ministerial Meeting of States Parties to the 1951 Convention and/or its 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees as an expression of their collective commitment to full and effective implementation of the Convention[8] and the Protocol;[9]

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[12] A/57/324.

[13] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 12* (A/57/12).

7. *Welcomes* the contribution of the process of Global Consultations on International Protection to strengthening the international framework for refugee protection and to equipping States to better address the challenges in a spirit of dialogue and cooperation, and welcomes in that connection the Agenda for Protection;[14]

8. *Reaffirms* that the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, as complemented by the Organization of African Unity Convention of 1969, remain the foundation of the international refugee protection regime in Africa, encourages African States that have not yet done so to accede to those instruments, and calls upon States parties to the Conventions to reaffirm their commitment to their ideals and to respect and observe their provisions;

9. *Notes* the need for States to address the root causes of forced displacement in Africa, and calls upon African States, the international community and relevant United Nations organizations to take concrete action to meet the needs of refugees, returnees and displaced persons for protection and assistance and to contribute generously to national projects and programmes aimed at alleviating their plight;

10. *Also notes* the link, inter alia, between human rights violations, poverty, natural disasters and environmental degradation and population displacement, and calls for redoubled and concerted efforts by States, in collaboration with the African Union, to promote and protect human rights for all and to address those problems;

11. *Encourages* the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to continue to cooperate with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, within their respective mandates, in the promotion and protection of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa;

12. *Notes with appreciation* the ongoing mediation and conflict resolution efforts carried out by African States, the African Union and subregional organizations, as well as the establishment of regional mechanisms for conflict prevention and resolution, and urges all relevant parties to address the humanitarian consequences of conflicts;

13. *Expresses its appreciation and strong support* for those African Governments and local populations that, in spite of the general deterioration of socio-economic and environmental conditions and overstretched national resources, continue to accept the additional burden imposed upon them by increasing numbers of refugees and displaced persons, in compliance with the relevant principles of asylum;

14. *Welcomes* the decision of African heads of State and Government to address the situation of refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa within the context of the New Partnership for Africa's Development;[7]

15. *Expresses its concern* about instances in which the fundamental principles of asylum are jeopardized by unlawful expulsion or refoulement or by threats to the life, physical security, integrity, dignity and well-being of refugees;

16. *Calls upon* States, in cooperation with international organizations, within their mandates, to take all necessary measures to ensure respect for the principles of refugee protection, and, in particular, to ensure that the civilian and humanitarian nature of refugee camps is not compromised by the presence or the activities of armed elements;

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[14] Ibid., *Supplement No. 12A* (A/57/12/Add.1), annex IV.

17. *Deplores* the deaths, injuries and other forms of violence sustained by staff members of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, urges States, parties to conflict and all other relevant actors to take all necessary measures to protect activities related to humanitarian assistance, to prevent attacks on and kidnapping of national and international humanitarian workers and to ensure their safety and security, calls upon States to investigate fully any crime committed against humanitarian personnel and to bring to justice persons responsible for such crimes, and calls upon organizations and aid workers to abide by the national laws and regulations of the countries in which they operate;

18. *Condemns* any exploitation of refugees, especially their sexual exploitation, and calls for those responsible for such deplorable acts to be brought to justice;

19. *Welcomes* the decision by the Office of the High Commissioner to put into place a code of conduct for humanitarian personnel aimed at preventing the exploitation of refugees, especially in the area of sexual exploitation;

20. *Calls upon* the Office of the High Commissioner, the African Union, subregional organizations and all African States, in conjunction with agencies of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and the international community, to strengthen and revitalize existing partnerships and forge new ones in support of the international refugee protection system;

21. *Calls upon* the Office of the High Commissioner, the international community and other concerned entities to intensify their support to African Governments through appropriate capacity-building activities, including training of relevant officers, disseminating information about refugee instruments and principles, providing financial, technical and advisory services to accelerate the enactment or amendment and implementation of legislation relating to refugees, strengthening emergency response and enhancing capacities for the coordination of humanitarian activities;

22. *Reaffirms* the right of return and also the principle of voluntary repatriation, appeals to countries of origin and countries of asylum to create conditions that are conducive to voluntary repatriation, and recognizes that, while voluntary repatriation remains the pre-eminent solution, local integration and third-country resettlement, where appropriate and feasible, are also viable options for dealing with the situation of African refugees who, owing to prevailing circumstances in their respective countries of origin, are unable to return home;

23. *Notes with satisfaction* the voluntary return of millions of refugees to their homelands following the successful repatriation and reintegration operations carried out by the Office of the High Commissioner with the cooperation and collaboration of countries hosting refugees and countries of origin, and looks forward to other programmes to assist the voluntary repatriation and reintegration of all refugees in Africa;

24. *Appeals* to the international community to respond positively, in the spirit of solidarity and burden-sharing, to the third-country resettlement requests of African refugees, and notes with appreciation that some African countries have offered resettlement places for refugees;

25. *Calls upon* the international donor community to provide financial and material assistance for the implementation of community-based development programmes in refugee-hosting areas, in agreement with host countries, which benefit both refugees and host communities, as appropriate;

26. *Welcomes* the programmes carried out by the Office of the High Commissioner with host Governments, the United Nations, non-governmental

organizations and the international community to address the environmental and socio-economic impact of refugee populations;

27. *Calls upon* the international donor community to provide material and financial assistance for the implementation of programmes intended for the rehabilitation of the environment and infrastructure affected by refugees in countries of asylum;

28. *Expresses its concern* about the long stay of refugees in certain African countries, and calls upon the Office of the High Commissioner to keep its programmes under review, in conformity with its mandate in the host countries, taking into account the increasing needs of refugees;

29. *Emphasizes* the need for the Office of the High Commissioner to collate statistics, on a regular basis, on the number of refugees living outside refugee camps in certain African countries with a view to evaluating and addressing the needs of those refugees;

30. *Urges* the international community, in a spirit of international solidarity and burden-sharing, to continue to fund generously the refugee programmes of the Office of the High Commissioner and, taking into account the substantially increased needs of programmes in Africa, to ensure that Africa receives a fair and equitable share of the resources designated for refugees;

31. *Requests* all Governments and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to pay particular attention to meeting the special needs of refugee women and children and displaced persons, including those with special protection needs;

32. *Calls upon* States and the Office of the High Commissioner to make renewed efforts to ensure that the rights, needs and dignity of elderly refugees are fully respected and addressed through appropriate programme activities;

33. *Expresses grave concern* about the plight of internally displaced persons in Africa, calls upon States to take concrete action to pre-empt internal displacement and to meet the protection and assistance needs of internally displaced persons, recalls in that regard the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement,[15] and urges the international community, led by relevant United Nations organizations, to contribute generously to national projects and programmes aimed at alleviating the plight of internally displaced persons;

34. *Invites* the Representative of the Secretary-General on internally displaced persons to continue his ongoing dialogue with Member States and the intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations concerned, in accordance with his mandate, and to include information thereon in his reports to the Commission on Human Rights and the General Assembly;

35. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive report on assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session, taking fully into account the efforts expended by countries of asylum, under the item entitled "Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, questions relating to refugees, returnees and displaced persons and humanitarian questions", and to present an oral report to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 2003.

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[15] E/CN.4/1998/53/Add.2, annex.